

Schuylkill Canal, Bausman's Lock No. 12
Coal Street and Garfield Creek
Schuylkill Haven Borough
Schuylkill County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-69

HAER
PA,
54-SCHUYH,
1A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Schuylkill Canal, Bausman's Lock No. 12

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Location: Schuylkill Canal where Coal Street Bridge crosses
Garfield Creek
Schuylkill Haven Borough, Schuylkill County,
Pennsylvania

Date of Construction: 1820-1821

Present Owner: P. Thomas Fraser

Significance: As an important part of the Schuylkill Canal system,
Bausman's Lock played a significant role in the
history of Pennsylvania until 1888 when competition
from the railroads forced it to close. Almost all of
the coal tonnage shipped on the canal was loaded at
Schuylkill Haven. Just a few yards east of Bausman's
Lock was the Navigation Building in which the canal
officials' offices were located. To the west of
Bausman's Lock were the largest and most extensive
dock and landings in the canal system.

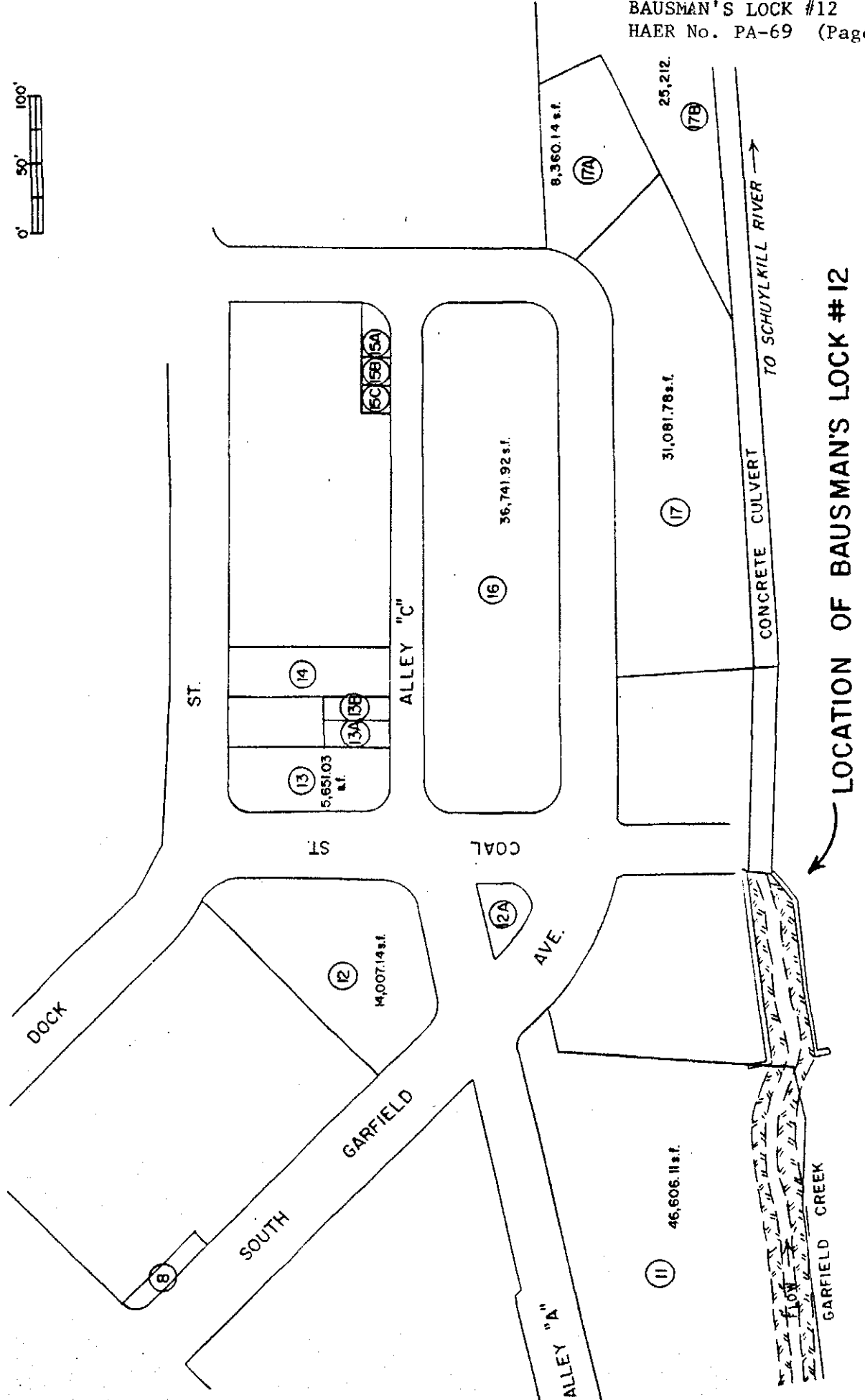
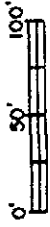
Project Information: Construction of flood protection improvements along
Garfield Creek at the site of Bausman's Lock is to be
funded by the Department of Housing and Urban
Development. Under Section 106 of the National
Historic Preservation Act of 1966, mitigative
documentation was undertaken by the Borough of
Schuylkill Haven in 1982.

Transmitted by: Jean P. Yearby, HAER, 1985

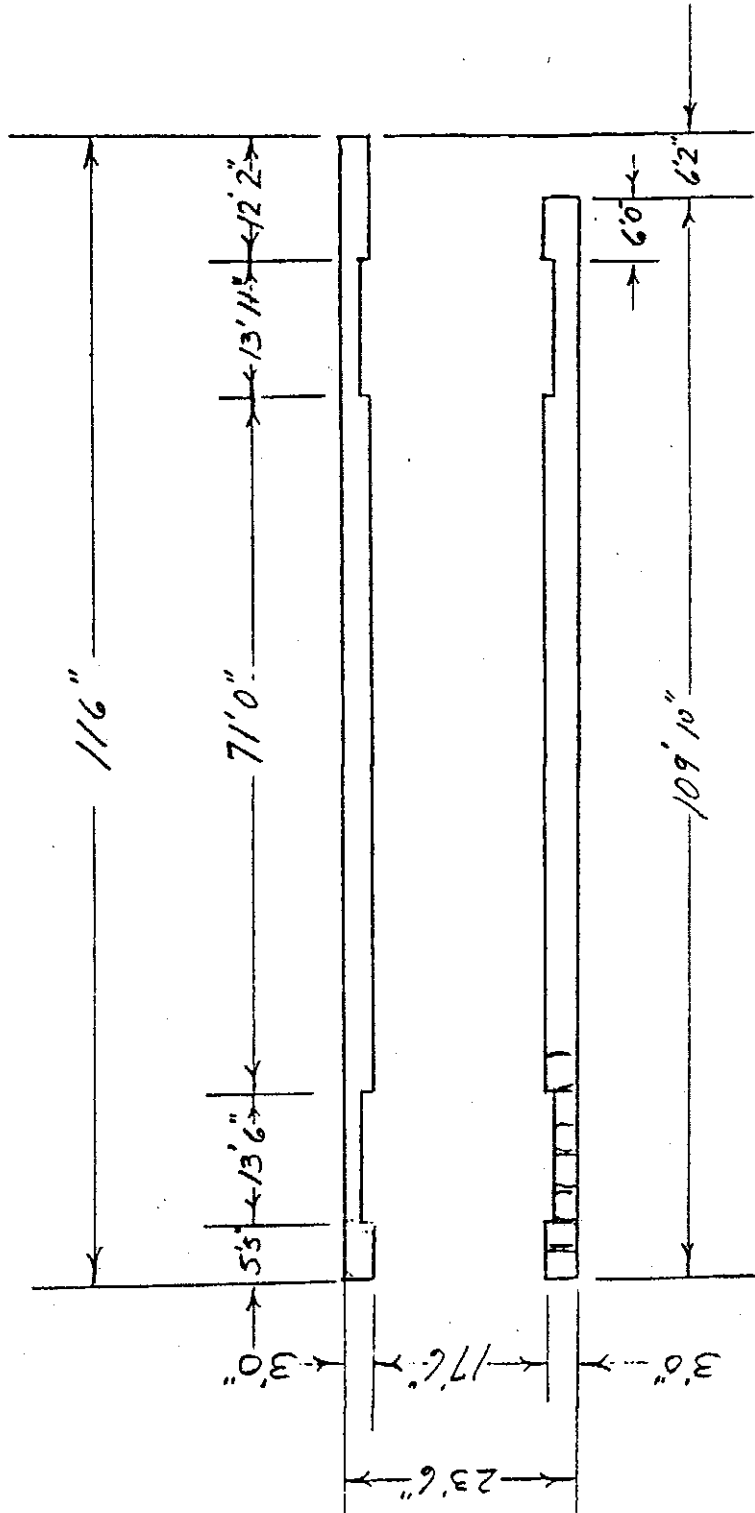
Bausman's Lock in Schuylkill Haven is part of the Schuylkill Canal which opened in 1824. The canal was built to provide a faster, more efficient transportation route between towns on the upper Schuylkill River and Philadelphia. It was part of a statewide system of waterways built early in the nineteenth century to help improve commerce between Philadelphia and the interior.

The Schuylkill Navigation Company constructed the 108.23 mile long Schuylkill Canal at a cost of \$13 million. Bausman's Lock at Schuylkill Haven was the twelfth lock from the upper terminus at Port Carbon. In the distance between Port Carbon and Bausman's Lock, there was a total lift of 109.32 feet. The dam at Bausman's lock was the deepest in this stretch, with a lift of 13.8 feet. Originally, the canal was built 17 feet wide, so that two boats with an 18-23 ton capacity, 75 feet long and 8 feet wide could pass through the locks side by side. Between 1833 and 1835, the canal was deepened, and a double line of locks was built so that boats of 200 ton capacity could travel up- and downstream at the same time. To compete with the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad that opened in 1842, the canal was enlarged again in that year.

When first built, lumber was the chief load for boats traveling down the canal to Philadelphia. Boats returned with store goods from the city. However, anthracite coal rapidly became the major downstream load. During the canal's period of greatest use from 1855-1867, an average of 1,153,333 tons of coal were transported annually. Despite this tonnage, the canal navigation company suffered from competition with the railroad. It lost business during the 1842 enlargement, and then in September 1850 floods seriously damaged canal banks, lock houses and twenty-three dams, closing navigation above Reading until the following spring. Floods closed the canal for a brief period again in 1862 and 1869. In 1870, the navigation company leased the canal to the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad for 999 years, in order to abate financial difficulty. The lease permitted the railroad to close the canal above Hamburg. By 1872, shipment of coal from points above Schuylkill Haven had ceased. Lime boats continued to use the canal until 1883, entering the level above Five Locks. In 1888, the canal was closed between Schuylkill Haven and Port Clinton, and in 1915, shipping from Port Clinton ceased. Closing the canal between Schuylkill Haven and Port Clinton effectively ended Schuylkill Haven's role as a leading center for shipment of anthracite coal, and the locks at Schuylkill Haven, including Bausman's Lock, ceased operation.



LOCATION OF BAUSMAN'S LOCK #12



PLAN OF BAUSMAN'S LOCK #12
ON THE SCHUYLKILL CANAL SCHUYLKILL HAVEN,
PENNSYLVANIA. BUILT CIRCA 1825
DEPTH OF LOCK 9'0"
MATERIAL: QUARRY CUTSTONE